

1 IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

2 FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

3 MCALLEN DIVISION

4 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA § CASE NO. 7:21-CR-02335
5 VERSUS § MCALLEN, TEXAS
6 CESAR VALLE § WEDNESDAY,
§ APRIL 6, 2022
§ 2:50 P.M. TO 3:14 P.M.

7 **RE-ARRAIGNMENT**

8 BEFORE THE HONORABLE MICAELA ALVAREZ
9 UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

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11
12 APPEARANCES: SEE NEXT PAGE
13 ELECTRONIC RECORDING OFFICER: STEPHANIE GARCIA
14 CASE MANAGER: JULIE ANN SANCHEZ
15 OFFICIAL INTERPRETER: STEVEN MINES
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1 IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

2 FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

3 MCALLEN DIVISION

4 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA § CASE NO. 7:22-CR-204
5 VERSUS § MCALLEN, TEXAS
6 CHRISTIAN ALEXIS § WEDNESDAY,
MEJORADO-JUAREZ § APRIL 6, 2022
7 § 2:50 P.M. TO 3:14 P.M.

8 RE-ARRAIGNMENT

9 BEFORE THE HONORABLE MICAELA ALVAREZ
10 UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

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1 **MCALLEN, TEXAS; WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 2022; 2:50 P.M.**

2 (Official Interpreter utilized for translation.)

3 THE COURT: Okay. All right. Let me call --
4 well, I'm going to call together 22-204, *Christian Alexis*
5 *Mejorado-Juarez*, as well as 21-2335, *Cesar Valle*.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Judge, what was the first
7 case?

8 THE COURT: 22-204, *Christian Alexis Mejorado-*
9 *Juarez*.

10 Please, raise your right hand to be sworn in.

11 DEFENDANTS, MEJORADO AND VALLE, SWORN

12 THE COURT: Thank you. You may put your hand
13 down.

14 Each one of you has indicated that you are ready
15 to enter a plea, so I do need to cover with you certain
16 rights and explain certain other matters. As I do so, if
17 there anything you do not understand, please, make sure to
18 let me know.

19 Also, for you, Mr. Mejorado, if you have
20 difficulty with the headset, please let me know, and I will
21 make sure it gets taken care of.

22 I have the two of you together even though you
23 face completely separate kind of charges. Much of what I
24 cover will be the same, so it just helps me a little bit to
25 be able to do this in groups with you. If, however, either

1 one of you prefers me to handle your case individually, let
2 me know, and I will do so, and it will not in any way harm
3 your case.

4 Do you understand this?

5 DEFENDANT VALLE: Yes, Your Honor.

6 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

7 THE COURT: Yeah. Each of one of you were sworn
8 in. That means that you are under oath. You are subject to
9 the penalties of perjury, and any statement you make here
10 today can be used against you.

11 Do you understand this?

12 DEFENDANT VALLE: Yes, Your Honor.

13 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

14 THE COURT: And I do want to start by asking a few
15 background questions beginning with you, Mr. Mejorado.

16 How old are you?

17 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: 22.

18 THE COURT: What kind of schooling do you have?

19 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: To sixth grade.

20 THE COURT: And are you a citizen of the United
21 States?

22 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: No.

23 THE COURT: Mr. Valle, how old are you?

24 DEFENDANT VALLE: 27, Your Honor.

25 THE COURT: How far did you go in school?

1 DEFENDANT VALLE: A GED, Your Honor.

2 THE COURT: Are you a citizen of the United
3 States?

4 DEFENDANT VALLE: Yes, Your Honor.

5 THE COURT: As to each one of you, are you now or
6 have you ever been under the care of a doctor, a
7 psychologist, psychiatrist, or any kind mental health
8 professional for any mental health issues?

9 DEFENDANT VALLE: No, Your Honor.

10 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: No.

11 THE COURT: Are you, now, under the influence of
12 any alcohol, drugs, or medications?

13 DEFENDANT VALLE: No, Your Honor.

14 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Only medicine.

15 THE COURT: Mr. Mejorado, for what are you taking
16 medicine?

17 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: High blood pressure
18 and heart medication.

19 THE COURT: And these are medications that are
20 prescribed to you there at the facility where you're being
21 held?

22 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

23 THE COURT: And other than what is prescribed to
24 you, have you taken anything else by way of medicines or
25 other drugs or alcohol?

1 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: No.

2 THE COURT: And I take it that those medications
3 don't in any way affect your ability to understand what you
4 covered with your lawyer, or to understand what I'm covering
5 with you?

6 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: No.

7 THE COURT: Thank you.

8 Mr. Valle, as to you, in the last 72 hours, have
9 you taken any alcohol, drugs, or medications?

10 DEFENDANT VALLE: No, Your Honor.

11 THE COURT: For each one of you, have you had
12 sufficient time to talk with your attorney about the charges
13 that you are facing?

14 DEFENDANT VALLE: Yes, Your Honor.

15 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

16 THE COURT: I'm going to review with each one of
17 you separately the charges -- the one count that you are
18 pleading to. I'll start with you, Mr. Mejorado.

19 I understand that you are pleading to Count Two of
20 your Indictment. Count Two charges that on or about January
21 the 18th of 2022, in the Southern District of Texas and
22 within the jurisdiction of this Court, that you knowing and
23 in reckless disregarded the fact that Ronald Alexis
24 Argumedo-Silicano was an alien who had come to, entered and
25 remained in the United States in violation of law, that you

1 knowingly transported, moved, attempted to transport and
2 attempted to move said alien within the United States in
3 furtherance of such violation of law; that is, from a
4 location near Alamo, Texas, to another location near
5 San Juan, Texas, by means of a motor vehicle for the purpose
6 of commercial advantage and private financial gain, in
7 violation of Title 8, USC Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(2) and
8 1324(a)(1)(B)(1).

9 So basically, the charge, Mr. Mejorado, is that
10 you know or you had enough information to know that this
11 person here by the name of Argumedo-Silicano was in the
12 country without any kind of legal authorization.

13 Now you don't have to know that person's name or
14 that person's specific identity, so long as you know they're
15 here illegally. And that you then in one manner or another
16 moved that person or tried to move that person to help as
17 that person made his or her way into the country illegally,
18 that you were doing this for some sort of financial benefit.
19 You were going to be paid or you're going to gain something
20 that benefits you financially.

21 Do you understand the charge?

22 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

23 THE COURT: Do you have any questions about the
24 charge?

25 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: No.

1 THE COURT: Thank you.

2 Turning to you, Mr. Valle, yours is a single-count
3 Indictment, and it charges that on or about October 16,
4 2021, in the Southern District of Texas and within the
5 jurisdiction of this Court that you, in connection with the
6 acquisition of firearms, namely three Century Arms Model
7 VSKA 7.62 by 39 millimeter caliber rifles and one Zastava
8 Model ZPAPM70 7.62 by 39 millimeter caliber rifle from D&D
9 Gun Parts, a licensed dealer of firearms within the meaning
10 of Chapter 44 Title 18 United States Code, that you
11 knowingly made a false or fictitious written statement to
12 D&D Gun Parts which statement was intended to and likely to
13 deceive D&D Gun Parts as to a fact material to the
14 lawfulness of such acquisition of the said firearms, in
15 that, you falsely represented on the AFT Form 4473 that you
16 were the actual buyer of the firearms described above when,
17 in truth and in fact, you knew that those statements and
18 representations were false, and that you were not the actual
19 buyer of the firearms in violation of Title 18 United States
20 Code Sections 922(a)(6) and 924(a)(2).

21 So there is a lot there, but basically, the
22 charge, Mr. Valle, is that you went to D&D to acquire these
23 firearms, but they were being acquired not for yourself, but
24 for somebody else, and that you, on the form 4473, that you
25 filled it out representing yourself to be the actual buyer

1 when you knew that you were not, and that this was material
2 that is important to the sale of these firearms.

3 Do you understand the charge?

4 DEFENDANT VALLE: Yes, Your Honor.

5 THE COURT: Any questions about the charge?

6 DEFENDANT VALLE: No, Your Honor.

7 THE COURT: All right. Thank you.

8 Now, for each one of you, in connection with the
9 charge or charges that you are facing, you do have the right
10 to be represented by an attorney throughout this case. You
11 have the right, even if you cannot afford an attorney. Do
12 you understand this?

13 DEFENDANT VALLE: Yes, Your Honor.

14 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

15 THE COURT: You also have the right to enter a
16 plea of not guilty to the charge as you did to begin with.
17 If you wish to go forward with a plea of not guilty, you
18 have the right to have a jury trial. The jury is made up of
19 12 citizens of this community, and the jury is the one that
20 would decide whether you are guilty or not guilty.

21 In connection with a jury trial, you have the
22 right to have the Government present the witnesses that the
23 Government has to testify against you. You have the right
24 through your attorney to ask questions of those witnesses.
25 You have the right also to present witnesses of your own and

1 to compel them -- that is to make them -- be present in
2 court to testify even if they do not wish to do so.

3 You also have the right to testify if you wish to
4 testify, but you have the right to remain silent as well.
5 If you choose to remain silent, that will not be considered
6 by the jury as being evidence that you are guilty or
7 evidence of anything else in the case.

8 These are all rights that you have if you wish to
9 go forward with a plea of not guilty. Do you understand
10 this?

11 DEFENDANT VALLE: Yes, Your Honor.

12 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

13 THE COURT: If you enter a plea of guilty, you
14 will be giving up your right to have a jury trial because I,
15 rather than the jury, will decide whether you are guilty.
16 You will be giving up your right to have the witnesses
17 presented, both yours and the Government's, and you will
18 also be giving up your right to remain silent because the
19 Government's attorney will tell me the facts of your case.
20 I will ask you questions about those facts, and you will
21 have to answer those questions for me.

22 Do you understand this as well?

23 DEFENDANT VALLE: Yes, Your Honor.

24 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

25 THE COURT: With that understanding, then, do you

1 wish to give up the right to have a jury trial, to have the
2 witnesses presented, and to remain silent by entering a plea
3 of guilty?

4 DEFENDANT VALLE: Yes, Your Honor.

5 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

6 THE COURT: Have you each spoken with your
7 attorney about what you may be facing by way of punishment
8 if you are found guilty in this case?

9 DEFENDANT VALLE: Yes, Your Honor.

10 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

11 THE COURT: Let me cover that with you as well.
12 And even though your charges are completely different, the
13 range of punishment that you are facing is the same, and for
14 each one of you, basically, you are facing up to ten years
15 of prison time. There is no minimum amount of time
16 required, but it can be up to ten years.

17 You will also face up to three years of what is
18 called supervised release. Supervised release is a period
19 of time after you have been released from prison. You are
20 not in custody anymore, but you are still kept under Court
21 supervision.

22 You are ordered to do or not do certain things,
23 and any violation of supervised release could mean that you
24 would have to come back to court, and you could end up
25 facing more time in prison for this offense.

1 Do you understand all of that?

2 DEFENDANT VALLE: Yes, Your Honor.

3 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

4 THE COURT: Now for you, Mr. Mejorado, because you
5 have told me that you are not a citizen of the United
6 States, it's also important that you understand that this is
7 the type conviction that will get you deported. You will
8 never be able to gain legal status in the United States with
9 this conviction on your record. Returning illegally at any
10 time could result in an immigration prosecution and you
11 would be facing up to 20 years of prison time.

12 And even if you are going to be deported, I can
13 place you under court supervision and, again, returning
14 illegally during that time could mean more time in prison
15 for this offense.

16 Do you understand that?

17 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

18 THE COURT: Now, each one of you is also facing
19 the possibility of a fine of up to \$250,000 depending on
20 your ability to pay, and then, the law requires you be
21 ordered to pay \$100 even if you cannot afford to do so.

22 Do you understand this as well?

23 DEFENDANT VALLE: Yes, Your Honor.

24 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

25 THE COURT: And I think, for the 1324, we have,

1 again, the \$5,000 special assessment; is that correct?

2 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Yes, Your Honor.

3 THE COURT: All right. Thank you.

4 Okay. So for you, Mr. Mejorado, there is also a
5 separate fine that you may be able to pay. It's called an
6 extra special assessment of up to \$5,000 that you could be
7 ordered to pay. Again, if I believe that you have the
8 ability to pay it, I can order you to pay that.

9 Do you understand that, as well?

10 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

11 THE COURT: Okay. For you, Mr. Valle, there is
12 also something else in the Indictment that I will touch on
13 with you, and that is that your Indictment gives you what is
14 called "Notice of Forfeiture." That is the Government has
15 let you know that it will seek to take title to possession
16 of the weapons involved in this offense -- the firearms,
17 whatever they happen to be -- involved this offense.

18 Now, anytime that the Government is trying to take
19 property that somebody else may have an interest in, that
20 person who claims an interest can assert their rights to
21 that property either through a criminal case such as this or
22 separately through an administrative proceeding.

23 Now, if you have a Plea Agreement, this may have
24 been waived in the Plea Agreement, but I do need to touch on
25 that anyway.

1 So first of all, do you understand that the
2 Government has given you that notice of forfeiture in the
3 Indictment?

4 DEFENDANT VALLE: Yes, Your Honor.

5 THE COURT: And do you understand that, unless you
6 have waived those rights, that you would be able to assert
7 rights if you wish to do so?

8 DEFENDANT VALLE: Yes, Your Honor.

9 THE COURT: Okay. All right. Then, I've touched,
10 for each one of you, on what you are facing under the law as
11 far as sentencing. There is something else that I have to
12 consider in deciding your actual sentence. This is for both
13 of you. I'm sorry. I may have missed that. Okay. I don't
14 know. All right.

15 So for both of you, then, in deciding your
16 sentence, I have to consider something called "the
17 Guidelines." The Guidelines provide the Court with a range
18 of months that I have to consider and decide your actual
19 sentence.

20 So at the time of sentencing, I will consider all
21 the information presented to me about you and your case. I
22 will consider the guidelines that apply to your case, as
23 well as the law that applies to sentencing. I will, then,
24 decide what sentence you should receive, and that sentence
25 can be in your guideline range, it could be less than your

1 guideline range, or it could be more than your guideline
2 range.

3 Provided I do not sentence you above the ten-year
4 maximum that applies to your case, basically, what I'm
5 saying about the guidelines is that I have to consider the
6 guidelines, but I do not have to follow the guidelines.

7 Do you each understand this?

8 DEFENDANT VALLE: Yes, Your Honor.

9 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

10 THE COURT: Do you have any questions about
11 anything that I've covered with you?

12 DEFENDANT VALLE: No, Your Honor.

13 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: No.

14 THE COURT: My next question is directed to the
15 Government. Is there a Plea Agreement for either of these
16 two Defendants?

17 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Yes, Your Honor. There are Plea
18 Agreements in both of these cases --

19 THE COURT: And --

20 MS. RODRIGUEZ: -- and also (indiscernible).

21 THE COURT: Since there is difference as to the
22 exact relief, so Mr. Mejorado, we're going to start with
23 you. The Government is going to recite for me the terms of
24 your Plea Agreement.

25 MS. RODRIGUEZ: The Plea Agreement for

1 Mr. Mejorado reads in pertinent part that the Defendant
2 agrees to plead guilty to Count 2 of the Indictment and the
3 Government will recommend that the offense level decrease by
4 two levels pursuant to United States Sentencing Guidelines
5 Section 3E1.1(a) if the Defendant clearly demonstrates
6 acceptance of responsibility and that the remaining counts
7 of the Indictment be dismissed at the time of sentencing.

8 THE COURT: Okay. So Mr. Mejorado -- or do you
9 have that there, the Plea Agreement, or has it been filed?

10 MS. RODRIGUEZ: (Indiscernible).

11 THE COURT: So Mr. Mejorado, if you could look at
12 that and confirm for me that you signed that Plea Agreement?

13 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

14 THE COURT: And did you review that with your
15 attorney before you signed it?

16 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

17 THE COURT: And if you would go ahead and hand
18 that over, Ms. Cantu?

19 (Pause in the proceedings.)

20 THE COURT: So Mr. Mejorado, for you basically the
21 agreement that you have with the Government is that in
22 exchange for your plea of guilty to Count 2, the Government
23 will recommend two points off for what we call "acceptance
24 of responsibility," and then it will dismiss the other
25 counts in the -- the other count in the Indictment.

1 Is that what you understand your agreement with
2 the Government to be?

3 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

4 THE COURT: All right. I'll come back to you in
5 just a moment.

6 Turning to Mr. Valle.

7 MR. FRY: Your Honor, the Agreement reads in
8 pertinent part -- Lee Fry on behalf of the United States.

9 The Defendant agrees to plead guilty to Count 1 of
10 the Indictment and to waive any and all interests in the
11 assets listed in the Notice of Forfeiture and to the
12 judicial or administrative forfeiture of any and all
13 firearms, weapons, and ammunition seized in connection with
14 the case, including, but not limited to, the nine firearms
15 and 1100 rounds of ammunition contained within the Notice of
16 Forfeiture. And the Defendant also agrees to waive any and
17 all procedural notice requirements for this forfeiture.

18 In exchange, the Government will recommend that
19 the offense level decrease by two levels pursuant to
20 Sentencing Guideline Section 3E1.1(a) if the Defendant
21 clearly demonstrates acceptance of responsibility, and that
22 the remaining count of the Indictment be dismissed at the
23 time of sentencing.

24 THE COURT: So Mr. Valle, do you have that there
25 in front of you?

1 DEFENDANT VALLE: Yes, ma'am.

2 THE COURT: And you can look at it and confirm for
3 me that you signed that agreement?

4 DEFENDANT VALLE: I did, Your Honor.

5 THE COURT: And is that the one to be filed with
6 the Court?

7 MR. SOLIS: It's been filed already.

8 THE COURT: It already has been filed. Okay. Can
9 I just go ahead and borrow your copy there since -- oh, I
10 have it. I'm sorry. I do have it in front of me. I have
11 it right here. All right. Okay.

12 So Mr. Valle, in your case, then, the agreement he
13 has just summarized, did you review that agreement with your
14 attorney before you signed it?

15 DEFENDANT VALLE: I did, Your Honor.

16 THE COURT: The Government has summarized that
17 basically that in exchange for your plea of guilty to
18 Count 1, along with waiving any and all interest in the
19 property involved in this offense, the Government will
20 recommend two levels off what is called "acceptance of
21 responsibility," and then dismiss the other count in the
22 Indictment.

23 Is that what you understand your agreement with
24 the Government to be?

25 DEFENDANT VALLE: Yes, Your Honor.

1 THE COURT: Thank you.

2 For each one of you, the agreement that you have
3 made with the Government is an agreement between you and the
4 Government only. It is not an agreement with the Court. By
5 that, I mean, that, if you do enter into a plea of guilty,
6 and I find you guilty, your case will be set for sentencing.

7 At the time of sentencing, I will consider the
8 recommendations made to me by the Government, but I do not
9 have to follow that recommendation; and even if I do not
10 follow that recommendation, I do not have to allow you to
11 withdraw your plea of guilty.

12 Do you understand this?

13 DEFENDANT VALLE: Yes, Your Honor.

14 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

15 THE COURT: Other than the agreements as reflected
16 in your Plea Agreement, do you believe that there has been
17 any other promise of any sort made to you by anybody,
18 whether it be the Government, your attorney, or anybody else
19 to get you to plead guilty?

20 DEFENDANT VALLE: No, Your Honor.

21 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: No.

22 THE COURT: Do you wish to enter a plea of guilty
23 freely and voluntarily?

24 DEFENDANT VALLE: Yes, Your Honor.

25 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

1 THE COURT: Has anybody threatened you or tried to
2 force you or coerce you into entering a plea of guilty?

3 DEFENDANT VALLE: No, Your Honor.

4 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: No.

5 THE COURT: And then, Mr. Mejorado, how do you
6 plead, guilty or not guilty to Count 2 of your Indictment?

7 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Guilty.

8 THE COURT: Mr. Valle, how do you plead to Count 1
9 of your Indictment?

10 DEFENDANT VALLE: Guilty.

11 THE COURT: The next part is where the Government
12 is going to state for me the facts of your case. Please,
13 listen carefully. We'll start with you, Mr. Mejorado,
14 unless I hear from the Government, I will ask you a few
15 questions.

16 MS. RODRIGUEZ: On or about January 18th, 2022 the
17 Defendant knowing and in reckless disregard of the fact that
18 Ronald Alexis Argumedo-Silicano, an alien who had come to,
19 entered and remained in the United States in violation of
20 law, did knowingly transport, move, attempt to transport and
21 attempt to move said alien within the United States in
22 furtherance of such violation of law, that is from a
23 location near Alamo, Texas to another location near
24 San Juan, Texas, by means of a motor vehicle.

25 On that date Border Patrol was conducting

1 surveillance on a residence in Alamo, Texas, suspected of
2 harboring undocumented aliens when they observed a vehicle
3 arrive and then leave approximately 20 minutes later.

4 Alamo Police Department responded and observed the
5 vehicle to be speeding so they initiated a traffic stop.
6 The vehicle failed to stop, continued speeding and
7 subsequently crashed into another vehicle. After the
8 accident, the driver, who was later determined to be the
9 Defendant, and all passengers exited the vehicle and ran.
10 All occupants were apprehended.

11 All occupants were also determined to be
12 undocumented aliens illegally present in the United States,
13 to include Ronald Alexis Argumedo-Silicano. The Defendant
14 provided consent to search the residence where additional
15 undocumented aliens were apprehended. The Defendant knew or
16 recklessly disregarded the fact that Ronald Alexis
17 Argumedo-Silicano was an alien, that is a non-citizen of the
18 United States, who had come to, entered, and remained in the
19 United States in violation of law.

20 The Defendant committed this offense by
21 transporting undocumented aliens by motor vehicle from
22 Alamo, Texas to a location in San Juan, Texas, in
23 furtherance of their unlawful presence in the United States.

24 Defendant committed this offense for financial
25 gain and commercial advantage in that he was to be paid.

1 THE COURT: Mr. Mejorado, do you agree with what
2 the Government stated?

3 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

4 THE COURT: So you admit that you were the driver
5 of this vehicle that ended up crashing; is that correct?

6 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

7 THE COURT: And even though you weren't
8 apprehended in the vehicle itself, you do admit that you had
9 been in that vehicle along with these other individuals who
10 were in the country illegally?

11 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

12 THE COURT: One of those being the one identified
13 by name is Argumedo-Silicano. You may not have known that
14 person's name, but you knew that he was in the country
15 illegally?

16 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

17 THE COURT: And the plan had been that you were
18 driving him to some other place or location to help as he
19 made his way into the country illegally. Is that also
20 correct?

21 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

22 THE COURT: And then the Government indicated
23 there were other individuals in the vehicle besides him and
24 other individuals at the house, as well. All of those
25 individuals you understood to be in the country illegally?

1 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

2 THE COURT: And you were doing this for some sort
3 of financial benefit? You were going to be paid or gain
4 something financially; is that correct?

5 DEFENDANT MEJORADO-JUAREZ: Yes.

6 THE COURT: All right. Thank you, Mr. Mejorado.
7 Turning to Mr. Valle.

8 MR. FRY: On or about October 16, 2021, the
9 Defendant, in connection with the acquisition of firearms,
10 knowingly made a false statement which is material to the
11 lawfulness of the sale of the firearms through a federally
12 licensed firearms dealer.

13 On that date, the Defendant purchased three
14 Century Arms Model VSKA and one Zastava Model ZPAPM70 7.62
15 by 39-millimeter caliber rifles at the gun show held in
16 McAllen, Texas. The Defendant purchased the four rifles
17 from D&D Gun Parts, a license dealer of firearms in the
18 meaning of Chapter 44 Title 18 of the United States Code.

19 In connection with the purchase of the firearms,
20 the Defendant falsely represented on a Bureau of Alcohol,
21 Tobacco, and Firearms Form 4473 that he was the actual buyer
22 of the firearms, when in truth and in fact, he knew he was
23 purchasing the firearms on behalf of another individual.

24 The Defendant indicated this in order to deceive
25 D&D Gun Parts as the name of the actual buyer of the firearm

1 is material to the lawful sale of the firearm by a federally
2 licensed firearms dealer.

3 THE COURT: Mr. Valle, do you agree with what the
4 Government stated?

5 DEFENDANT VALLE: I do, Your Honor.

6 THE COURT: Okay. So basically, you admit,
7 Mr. Valle, that at this gun show, you purchased these
8 firearms in your own name reflecting that on the Form 4473,
9 but the guns were actually not being purchased for yourself;
10 is that correct?

11 DEFENDANT VALLE: Yes, Your Honor.

12 THE COURT: And you understood that the name of
13 the individual making the actual purchase was something that
14 was, we say material, but something that was important that
15 could make a difference as far as the sale; is that correct?

16 DEFENDANT VALLE: Yes, Your Honor.

17 THE COURT: All right. Thank you, Mr. Valle.

18 For each one of you, then, the Court does find
19 that you are competent to enter a plea, that you understand
20 the nature of the charge against you, as well as the
21 consequences of entering a plea, that you are entering a
22 plea of guilty freely and voluntarily, and that there is a
23 factual basis for the plea of guilty.

24 The Court does find you guilty, Mr. Mejorado, as
25 charged in Count 2 of your Indictment.

1 Mr. Valle, as charged in Count 1 of your
2 Indictment.

3 For each one of you, sentencing is set for July
4 the 18th at 2:00 p.m. A presentence investigation and
5 report to be completed by May 11th, objections to be filed
6 by May the 25th, with the final report due on June the 8th.

7 Anything else as to either Defendant?

8 MR. SOLIS: No, Your Honor. Thank you very much.

9 THE COURT: All right.

10 MS. CARMEN: No, Your Honor. Thank you.

11 THE COURT: All right. Thank you. Then, you may
12 be excused.

13 DEFENDANT VALLE: Thank you, Your Honor.

14 THE COURT: Yes. Thank you.

15 (Proceedings adjourned at 3:14 p.m.)

16 * * * * *

17 I certify that the foregoing is a correct
18 transcript to the best of my ability produced from the
19 electronic sound recording of the proceedings in the above-
20 entitled matter.

21 /S/ MARY D. HENRY

22 CERTIFIED BY THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF

23 ELECTRONIC REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS, CET**337

24 JUDICIAL TRANSCRIBERS OF TEXAS, LLC

25 JTT TRANSCRIPT #66192 DATE FILED: SEPTEMBER 20, 2022